



Australian  
National  
University

# ANU Tibetan Language Program



Ranked

#1

ANU is ranked #1 in 12 Academic Disciplines in Australia

\*QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025

## Why study Tibetan?

Understanding Tibetan allows speakers to access rich cultural texts and traditions, to play a part in preserving these traditions and gain contemporary links to a country and region undergoing rapid change. Tibetan is the most widely spoken language in the Himalaya. It is spoken in Tibet, parts of China, northern Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and parts of India. It is also used in Mongolia by followers of Tibetan Buddhism. It has an alphabet of thirty letters, no punctuation and has its own unique counting system. As the only living language that gives direct access to ancient Bon religion and Mahayana Buddhism, Tibetan opens the door to a vast repository of literary, scientific and philosophical wisdom and is the primary language of classical Tibetan art, music, dance, literature, medicine, history, astrology and logic. Apart from classical literature, Tibetan also provides a window to the modern Tibetan art and literature including movies, novels, poems, music, songs, and news. Tibetan is also essential for studying the culture, history and languages of the Himalayan region.

**“[Using just a few Tibetan words made] the locals' eyes light up! The next thing you know they're...talking to me in a way that otherwise wouldn't have been possible.”**

— LUIZ BIBEIRO, STUDENT THROUGH OPEN UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA (OUA)



## Study Tibetan at ANU

Tibetan is the most widely spoken language of the Himalaya, used from Baltistan in Pakistan to Sichuan in China. It is a gateway to the region's rich culture, religious traditions, and everyday social life. Tibetan was also the target language of one of the largest translation projects in history, which rendered thousands of Indian and Chinese Buddhist texts into Tibetan. This remarkable heritage preserves texts and traditions not found anywhere else.

At ANU, students can study Tibetan through a sequence of four language courses (Tibetan 1-4). Completing the minor provides an intermediate ability in speaking, reading and writing Tibetan.

### How will you learn

- Interactive eTextbook: *Introduction to the Tibetan Language* (ANU Press), a multimedia resource designed for non-Tibetan learners.
- Weekly workshops: 3 hours of conversation, reading, and writing practice.
- Expert teaching: classes are led by a native Tibetan author and experienced educator.
- Flexible delivery: ANU was the first university worldwide to offer Tibetan with a fully online option.
- ANU Students: Choose to study Tibetan as an elective or minor (24 units/4 courses) as part of your ANU degree.
- Open Universities Australia (OUA): Enrol in individual courses for professional development or personal interest without pursuing a full degree.
- Advanced Courses: Progress through Tibetan language levels 1-4, and explore subjects in South & Central Asia Studies.

Students with prior language experience must take a Language Proficiency Assessment (LPA) for proper level placement. For details, see the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP) language proficiency assessment site

Learn Tibetan language and culture at the Australian National University.

## Further Information

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